

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

ISSUED BY THE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

26 SEPTEMBER 1962
~~TOP SECRET~~

1. Cuba

a. The port facility in Cuba, which the Soviets contracted for yesterday, will be the first base for their fishing fleets outside the bloc.

b. The Soviet North Atlantic fishing fleet of some 500 trawlers has operated primarily around the Grand Banks, but has been extending its operations southward. Some of the trawlers are converted for oceanographic research and communications intelligence operations.

c. We do not know where the base is planned, but would expect some port to be chosen which already has some facilities (and could be expanded later) to permit early use by Soviet vessels.

d. Meanwhile, Panama is following up Senator Smathers' idea of a Caribbean region military alliance against Cuba.

e. Panamanian delegates in New York are promoting a meeting of the ten countries concerned to consider the idea and to work out an agreed position to present at the forthcoming Washington meetings.

2. Berlin

a. U Thant told Ambassador Stevenson yesterday, in connection with Khrushchev's idea of posting a UN observer in Berlin, that he did not feel the UN should undertake heavy responsibilities in Berlin at present.

b. As a beginning, however, U Thant thought that as a humanitarian measure an observer might be useful, perhaps assisting divided families on both sides of the wall and carrying out some degree of liaison between the two sides. In any case, he did not want to take the initiative in the matter.

c. The subject of Berlin did not come up during Secretary Rusk's luncheon meeting with Gromyko yesterday.

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4. France-Algeria

a. [redacted] over 3,000 Europeans who have disappeared in Algeria since early July as victims of Algerian reprisals.

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b. Paris is trying to hush up the matter, both to encourage refugees to return (there are some 650,000 of them) and to reduce the political impact of the refugee issue on the October referendum and the later assembly elections.

c. [redacted] Ben Bella is still putting his government together.

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5. Congo

a. [redacted] more Katangan planes have been spotted at the same airfield where UN reconnaissance earlier showed [redacted] Harvards [redacted].

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b. The new planes, also thought to be Harvards, are [redacted] adjacent to the field at Kolwezi. Word is that the Katangans have arranged to obtain an unknown number of P-51 Mustangs, but we have no confirmation.

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c. Reports that the Katangan gendarmerie has been expanded [redacted]

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[redacted] also show that Tshombé has in mind the possibility of an eventual military showdown.

REVIEW OF THE SITUATION IN YEMEN

1. Seventy-one-year-old Imam Ahmad ~~also~~ died of pulmonary illness on 19 September.

He was one of the more colorful monarchs of the area.

2. He had ruled Yemen's 5 million citizens since 1948 by buying off powerful tribal chiefs, taking "custody" (i.e., hostage) of their sons and ruthlessly suppressing all dissidence. During his reign he survived two coup attempts (one, in 1955, was led by his brother whom the Imam later publicly executed in a mass beheading), a tribal revolt, and an assassination attempt.

- 3.

4. Mohammed Badr, the late Imam's 35-year-old son and "Crown Prince," has moved quickly to consolidate his position as the new Imam. In a bid for support, he has announced a general amnesty for political prisoners and abolished the system of hostages. There has as yet been no overt opposition to him, but his accession is known to be resented by Yemen's powerful northern tribes.

5. The Imamate, which is in fact a religious office from which the holder derives political authority as well, has by custom been filled by tribal agreement. The northern tribal chiefs object to the arbitrary designation of Badr by the late Imam. They would prefer Prince Hasan, Imam Ahmad's brother, who is presently in New York as head of the Yemeni UN delegation.

6. Hasan is adopting a wait-and-see attitude toward Badr and has denied that he plans to return to Yemen to lead the opposition.

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7. Badr has relatively progressive ideas, by Yemeni standards (i.e., he wants to drag the Yemeni out of the eleventh century but certainly not into the twentieth). But he has not shown himself to have his father's strength of purpose.

8. In attempting to placate the conservative tribal elements, Badr runs the risk of exposing himself to overthrow by pro-Nasir republican elements

The Egyptian government's overt relationship might become reasonably cordial

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9. Badr, as Crown Prince, was instrumental in obtaining economic and military aid from the Soviet bloc. This represents economic opportunism rather than political conviction.

NOTES

- A. French Tests The French plan several atomic tests in the Sahara between late next month and early December. These [redacted] will be the last in the Sahara. Thereafter, testing (not before the middle of next year) will be done [redacted] in the Pacific, [redacted]
- B. China-USSR The Reuters correspondent in Peiping claims that Russian officials there have acknowledged the two remaining Soviet consulates at Shanghai and Harbin will be closed next month "as an economy move." Rumors to this effect had earlier been denied by Soviet officials in Shanghai and Peiping, but we had thought it a distinct possibility and are now inclined to accept it as a fact.
- C. China [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
- D. USSR Extensive Far Eastern military exercises of the past three weeks have ended. They featured live firing to Kamchatka of three medium-range missiles.
[redacted]
- E. [redacted]

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DOCUMENT OF INTEREST

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